

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1
Ag 84 Aw
no. 29
cop. 1

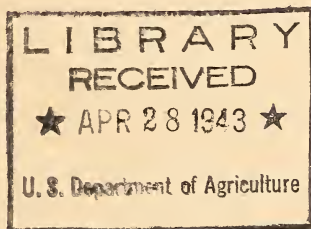
THE CHALLENGE TO FARM YOUTH IN 1943

A Message to 4-H Club Members

by

CLAUDE R. WICKARD

Secretary of Agriculture



EXTENSION SERVICE
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Washington, D. C.
February 1943

AWI-29

The Challenge To Farm Youth in 1943

A Message to 4-H Club Members

By Claude R. Wickard

Secretary of Agriculture

I want to congratulate every one of the million and a half 4-H Club members on your fine work last year. I am proud of you. All of you have done a grand job of helping raise Food for Freedom.

Bigger Job Ahead

This year an even bigger job is ahead of you. American farmers are facing heavier responsibilities than they ever have faced before. This Nation and the other United Nations need tremendous amounts of American food and other farm products to fight and win the war. The amounts we turn out in 1943 may have a lot to do with how soon we win final victory over Germany and Japan. Every farm boy and girl has a part to play this year in helping to win the battle of farm production. You 4-H members have the training and the organization to play an especially large part. The country needs all the help you can give, and I know that you are going to do your very best.

Sometimes it is hard to realize the full size of agriculture's job in 1943, even though we all know it is enormous. We have set farm production goals. The goal for each product represents the amount we need to turn out this year to supply our Army and Navy, to keep people here at home well fed, and to send to our allies overseas. In other words, those goals represent the food and other farm products we will need to fight the war effectively.

When you consider how high most of those goals are, and how much trouble farmers are going to have in getting enough labor and materials, you see more clearly what a tremendous job we have on our hands.

A Man's Part To Play

When you study the goals and the program for reaching them, you can see clearly that every farm boy and girl in the United States has a man's part or a woman's part to play. Every one of you is called to be a loyal, effective, and courageous soldier on the home front. And I want you to know that you are truly in the fight when you help produce food, fibers, and oil. You will be holding the line, too, when each of you does his part to keep well and keep up good cheer among our home folks—when you can write to brothers, cousins, and fathers at the battle front that all is well at home. And you farm boys and girls also will be serving your Nation when you work diligently to fit yourselves for future service in our Army and Navy, or in supporting activities at home.

Thousands of former 4-H Club boys and girls are today with America's armed forces as soldiers, sailors, marines, doctors, and nurses. The men—and the women—in the Service, must have plenty of food—milk, eggs, poultry, and meat. They must have clothing. They must have tanks, guns, and ammunition. We must produce everything that they need to fight and win.

Hard To Produce Enough

You boys and girls know how hard it is going to be to produce enough. It is a task that ordinarily would call for extra machinery and extra manpower. Also, we must not let the productiveness of our farms decline, for the needs for our food will multiply while the war lasts, and when we start rebuilding a better world afterward.

During the past year more than a million and a half people have left farms to go to war or to take city war jobs. This drain from the farms could have a serious effect upon food production. Yet, we are a resourceful people. We have the energy, the intelligence, the enthusiasm, the vision, and certainly we have the incentive to win this fight for increased food production.

Young people on farms can help a whole lot in solving our farm labor problem. Boys—and girls, too, for that matter—are eager to roll up their sleeves and help the cause by driving tractors, planting, plowing, gardening, milking cows, raising pigs, and feeding chickens, while their older brothers are driving tanks, flying bombers, or operating machine guns overseas. You know how necessary food is to keep this country's war effort rolling. You know that you are no less a part of the total war program because you toil at home

"Best News I Have Heard"

4-H boys and girls the country over are laboring long and hard on home farms and neighboring farms. Not long ago, two club members—a boy and a girl from Virginia—came to my office in Washington and presented me with a book containing stories of your 4-H achievements from every part of the United States. That visit, and the interesting stories in the book, impressed me deeply. The record made me very proud of you 4-H Club members. Those 4-H representatives had brought me some of the best news that I had heard for some time.

I was especially interested in the accounts of how 4-H members solved their farm labor problems by pooling their efforts. In one instance, I remember, 3,000 trees on a Virginia farm were loaded with more peaches than they had borne in years, but there was no labor to pick them. Twenty girls in the local 4-H Club

came to the rescue and gathered all the fruit. If they had not, most of it would have spoiled. I want to mention some of the other examples of outstanding work that particularly impressed me.

In Texas more than 24,000 girls worked in the fields driving tractors, plowing, planting, and hauling cotton.

In Nevada a 12-year-old club girl ran a buck rake in the hayfields all summer, taking the place of the hired man.

A 4-H Club girl in Washington took over an 80-acre farm, managed it, and cared for 10 head of dairy cows during the summer months, while her father worked in shipbuilding yards at Vancouver.

4-H Club members manned beet fields in Utah and helped with the thinning and harvesting.

In Arizona 2,000 4-H Club members helped to pick the cotton crop.

In Oregon 4-H Club members drove tractors, ran combines, and fitted neatly into the adult harvest program throughout the entire State, both boys and girls taking an active part.

In South Carolina 4-H Club members are keeping their brooder equipment busy during the entire year so they can turn out more poultry for meat, as well as bring up their egg production.

In Florida 4-H Club members have added one more pig to each herd—and named it Vic.

There were stories like that from every State in the country. Club members jumped right in to help lighten farm labor problems.

There will be a lot more need for your help this year. As I have said, every farm boy and girl can help, and often can be more effective by working through the 4-H organization. So I hope to hear that the 4-H Clubs are growing this year. I know that every 4-H member will be doing his or her very best for victory.

FOR SALE BY SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

To All 4-H Club Members of the United States:

The turn of each year is symbolic of youth and renewed confidence. Never before has a New Year presented to all youth a greater challenge to do their part in a democratic world. The whole Nation recognizes your self-reliance, your steadfast determination to attain your goals, and your patriotic devotion as individuals and as a group.

At this time it is particularly gratifying to learn of your extensive mobilization plans for 1943 to help the farmers of America to bring about still greater food production. May the observance of National 4-H Mobilization Week, February 6 to 14, reach into every rural home. We have faith in your ability to render a great service in this way. We know that you, like your brothers and sisters in the Service, have the spirit and perseverance that will bring victory in the fight for human freedom and a world at peace.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

THE WHITE HOUSE.

December 29, 1942.

☆ GPO 16-32835-1